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FIRST HOUSES

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BOUND BROOK





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FIRST HOUSES OF BOUND BROOK.

AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

WASHINGTON CAMP GROUND ASSOCIATION

BY REV. T. E. [✓]DAVIS,

AT THE RESIDENCE OF THE HON. GEORGE LA MONTE,

ON

WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 1893.

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PREFACE.

Since this address was delivered, many additions and corrections have been made, which now appear in this enlarged form.

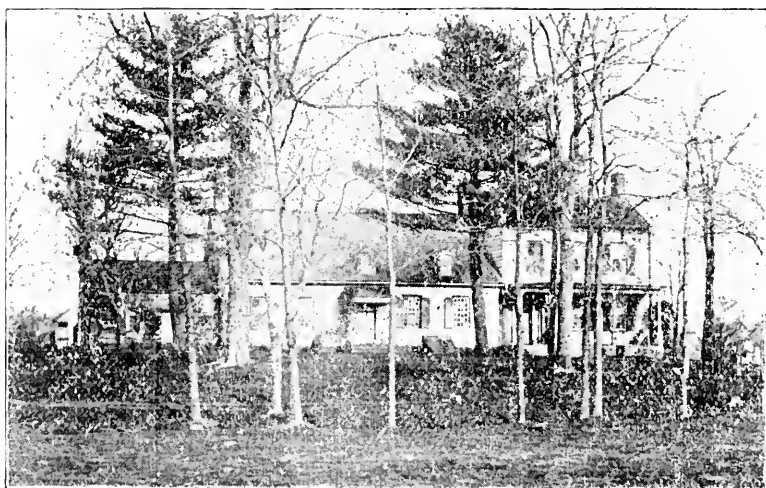
I have made a long and careful research of the old literature in the various historical societies, and among the county records, in order to give as complete and authentic a history as possible of the "FIRST HOUSES OF BOUND BROOK." I am under special obligation to Messrs. John Bush and A. C. Mollison and many others for valuable information.

My thanks are due to many kind friends of the Camp Ground Association, who have greatly encouraged and helped me, in the arduous work of thus revealing the historic past of Bound Brook.

T. E. DAVIS.

Bound Brook, June 27. 1893.





STAATS HOUSE.

See page 26.

First Houses of Bound Brook.

Mr. President, members of the Washington Camp Ground Association, and invited guests :

WE ARE gathered to-day on historic ground. Around us are a hundred reminders of that most eventful period in American history, when these colonies became an independent nation. Across these fields, and o'er these highways, passed those noble men who laid the foundation stones of this Temple of Liberty. The soil we tread is consecrated ground, hallowed by the sorrows and blood and dust of that patriot band, who struggled, suffered and died for their country.

Loyal men and true women were they who lived in Bound Brook in 1776. No greater honor was ever paid to any American citizen, than when it was declared that, because of continued resistance to the authority of Great Britain, Hendrick Fisher, Tobias Van Norden, Abraham Staats and Peter Harpending, all of Bound Brook, should not be included in the general amnesty offered to all the citizens of the American colonies in 1776. Noble men, indeed, were they, and these old houses where once they lived, these fields they tilled, their ancestry still with us, are all reminders of the heroic past. And to-day from every road and hilltop, from many a Revolutionary house still standing, from yonder old camp ground where every national holiday there floats the flag of freedom, from yonder mountain top where often stood the Father of his Country, from every memorial stone above our sleeping heroes, there arises a cloud of witnesses through whose testimony we are

brought to love and keep this priceless heritage of our native land. We are, indeed, on historic ground, for to-day we are on the very site of the first house in Bound Brook and in Somerset county, and so it is fitting that I should take as my subject

THE FIRST HOUSES OF BOUND BROOK.

At the time of the Revolution, as nearly as I can determine, there were thirty-five houses between the Bound brook and the Middle brook, the Raritan river and the Blue hills. South of the Raritan river, in South Bound Brook and vicinity, there were ten or twelve houses, and about the same number in the vicinity of Greenbrook and Fieldville. With one or two exceptions, I shall only speak of those houses that were located between the brooks and on the north side of the river.

The tract of land in which is the borough of Bound Brook was purchased from the Indians in May, 1681. The purchasers were eight men, among whom was Philip Carteret, Governor of the Province of New Jersey. This land was bought for speculative purposes probably, as only one of the purchasers occupied any portion of it, the remainder being divided and sold to other parties. Thomas Codrington, one of the original purchasers, received as his share of the land 877 acres, lying between the Middle brook and what is now Vosseller avenue, fronting on the Raritan River and running back to the Blue hills.

CODRINGTON HOUSE.

Here he built a house in 1683, which was the first dwelling house in Bound Brook and in Somerset county. The present residence of the Hon. George LaMonte is on the exact site of the original house of Codrington. Codrington gave to his place the Indian name of Racawachanna (the loomy flat by the running brook.) The house was built on a slight elevation of ground, sloping on all sides, which tradition says was an Indian mound where the Raritan tribe buried their dead. If this be true, it is the cause for the belief of the past generations that

the house was haunted. So strong was the fear produced by this belief that many of the colored servants dared not go out alone at night, expecting that some Indian ghost would surely carry them away.

Thomas Codrington sold his property in 1700 to Aaron Lazaidier, and from that time for nearly 100 years the house was owned and occupied by the Lazaidier family through three generations. A large addition was built to this house in the early part of this century, probably by Alexander Campbell, who was the owner until August 4, 1817. In the spring of 1854 Daniel Talmage took down the entire building erected by Codrington, removed the Campbell addition to its site, and built an entirely new house adjoining on the south. This was the end of the history of the first house in Bound Brook, it having stood for over one hundred and seventy years, and having been the home of many a prominent man among its twelve owners. Thomas Codrington three times received an appointment as a member of the Governor's council. Dr. Samuel Swan, who resided here from 1827 to the time of his death in 1844, was a United States Congressman for twelve years. Thomas A. Hartwell, living here in 1845, was one of the most prominent lawyers of Somerset county. By persons now living, and who once resided in the original Codrington house, it is described as a most quaint and curious building, unlike any other house of ancient date in Bound Brook. There was no second story or no cellar. The roof was very steep, with a wide projection coming nearly to the windows. The upper and lower window sashes were of different sizes, the upper containing three rows of glass, the lower only two. The size of the panes of glass was about five by seven. The house contained seven rooms, four of which were for sleeping. The fire places were very large, covering nearly one whole side of the room, and it is said were large enough to receive a cord of wood at once. Hard wood shingles, very large in size, were used for siding. The present name of this old home-

stead, "The Evergreens," was given by Daniel Talmage, who also set out the beautiful arbor vitæ hedge. This old homestead during the two hundred and ten years of its existence has had twenty-one owners.

CAMPBELL HOUSE.

This was the second house erected in Bound Brook. It was built in 1684 by John Campbell, son of Lord Neill Campbell, of Scotland. The exact location I have been unable to fix, but I think it was near the north bank of the Raritan river, and south of the present Central railroad depot, and not on the south side of the river as some early histories indicate. This is not what the old people of Bound Brook know as the Campbell house, to which reference will afterward be made. Lord Neill Campbell, with his brother the Duke of Argyle, and the two sons of each, had been engaged in a rebellion against their own government which ended disastrously. Lord Neill's sons, John and Archibald, fled from Scotland and came to New Jersey. Archibald settled on the north side of the Raritan river, near the mouth of the Millstone river. John came to Bound Brook and built a "large and pretentious dwelling." He probably lived here for only one year, for in 1685 he bought a tract of land in South Branch, and from that year we hear nothing more from him in Bound Brook. Of the history of the Campbell house almost nothing is known. During its last days it was in a very dilapidated condition and was occupied by a family of Jews. All the ruins of the house had disappeared as early as 1815. John Campbell's son Archibald had a daughter Jannette who married Tobias Van Norden. She was the great-grandmother of Archibald Campbell Van Norden Mollison, our honored citizen.

JEW HOUSE.

Many of our older citizens call this the Campbell house. This is due to the fact that a few years before its destruction it was in possession of Elias Campbell. Aaron Lazaider, a Jew, had been a merchant in New York City. He retired from business in 1698, came to

Bound Brook and built the "Jew House." He lived here only two years and in 1700 bought Racawacahana from Thomas Codrington and lived there until his death, in 1744. He still retained possession of the "Jew House." Two children survived him, a son Moses, and a daughter Catherine who married her father's employe, John R. Myers. Moses inherited Racawacahana, and Catherine the "Jew House." She with her husband had already been living in this same house since 1738. They continued to reside here until they died, she in 1762 and he in 1765, both being very old. His age is given as 92. The "Jew House" was left to a daughter, who was then a widow, and who was living in the house during the early period of the Revolution. She was an enthusiastic Tory, and when in the spring of 1777 Lord Cornwallis with the British army had possession of Bound Brook, he and his staff, by invitation of its mistress, made the "Jew House" their headquarters. She was a rich widow and was wooed and won by one of the officers of Cornwallis' staff. Soon after, she left Bound Brook with her husband and never again visited her early home. The property was confiscated and sold to other owners, who occupied it until 1784, when John R. Myers, Jr., the son of John R. Myers and Catherine Lazaider, returned to Bound Brook and brought suit for the property. The regular form of confiscation had not been complied with and he won his suit, regaining possession of the house with lands attached. He sold it in 1785 to Tobias Van Norden. It afterward passed into the hands of Elias Campbell. It was sold to Jeremiah Fisher after Campbell's death, and was finally bought by the railroad company, who tore it down to build their roadway. The house stood almost directly south of the Presbyterian Church and about one hundred yards east of the present Central railroad depot. The "Jew House" was probably the finest building in Bound Brook for many years. It had large and handsome double parlors, a luxury only enjoyed by the very wealthy in those early days. The

partitions between those rooms were inlaid with alternate stripes of black walnut and white oak. The closets and cupboards had beautiful glass doors, the sashes of which were entirely covered with gilding, as were also the shelves inside. The exposed beams in the house were ornamented with beautiful carvings in high relief, and to show these more perfectly the beams were painted white. Some of our oldest citizens still remember the old "Jew House" in its latter days, when the glory had departed from it and decay was seen on every side.

These were the first houses in Bound Brook and probably the only ones built before 1700. During the year 1700 nearly all the land included in the present borough of Bound Brook, the western line being the mountain road, now Vosseller avenue, was sold to George Cussart, Jacob De Groot and Samuel Thompson, each of whom erected houses during this same year.

CUSSART HOUSE.

This house stood on the present site of the Mansion House. It was built in 1700 by George Cussart, who owned all the land between the Bound Brook and Mountain avenue, fronting on the Raritan river. George Cussart died about 1740 and David Cussart, probably his son, came into possession of the property. During the Revolution the Cussart house was used as a hotel. It was known as the "Washington Hotel," from a large swinging sign in front of it, on which was painted a portrait of Washington on horseback. Peter Staats was the landlord. He was a brother of Col. John Staats, of Revolutionary fame, and like him was a true friend to the cause of American liberty. More than one Tory who dared to uphold the British cause in the presence of Peter Staats, felt the power that lay in that strong patriot's arms. As a result of his loyalty he suffered very much from the depredations of the British soldiers. When Col. Simcoe with the "Queen's Rangers," a band of native Americans who had enlisted in the army of

Great Britain, passed through Bound Brook on the memorable raid of October 26, 1777, they stopped at this hotel and robbed it of everything valuable which they could carry with them. After many changes and improvements the old Cussart house was entirely destroyed by the great fire of 1881.

DE GROOT HOUSE.

This house was about one hundred and fifty feet back from Main street, its site now being covered by the chapel of the Roman Catholic Church, and the barn belonging to Mr. O. B. Reynolds. It was built in 1700 by Jacob De Groot, who was the son of Peter De Groot, a French Protestant, who came from Rochelle, France, to America and settled in New York City. Jacob De Groot owned over one thousand acres of land all in one tract, although purchased of different parties and at different times. His first purchase of 585 acres, of which the present Mountain avenue was the eastern line, was in possession of the De Groot family for 143 years, no portion of it being sold until after the death of Judge Jacob De Groot, the grandson of Jacob De Groot, the original owner. The house was a frame building, a well-built, substantial structure, as were all the dwellings of that period. It faced to the south and had a large kitchen on the west end, which was occupied by the slaves, of whom the De Groot family always had a large number. One of these, known as Mammy Betts, lived to the extreme age of 115 years. During Washington's encampment near Bound Brook he accepted the invitation of Jacob De Groot, Jr., and was hospitably entertained at his home. This Jacob De Groot of the Revolution was a captain of the militia, and a loyal citizen. The British made several attempts to capture him, but unsuccessfully. At one time his wife, seeing the enemy coming, hid him in the large brick oven, filling the front with wood, which she was in the act of setting on fire as they entered the house. Never for a moment supposing that the object of their search could be in that oven, they looked care-

fully in other parts of the house and then left confident that he was beyond their reach. At another time a band of British marauders broke into the house and took such things as pleased them. Jacob De Groot was sick in an upper room. One of the officers finding him, drew his sword with the intention of killing him. Mrs. De Groot sprang forward, grasping the blade of the sword, and saved the life of her husband, but her hand was so severely cut that a scar remained until her death. Jacob De Groot and his wife lived to a good old age, and died in the old homestead on July 13 and July 22, 1843; she dying first, and only nine days before his death. They had lived together for 68 years. The three families of De-Groofs, Jacob, John and Jacob, father, son and grandson, had lived in this house for 143 years. The father and son were buried on their own farm, while the grandson rests in his vault in the old Presbyterian burying ground. The De Groot house was burned in 1852.

THOMPSON HOUSE.

Samuel Thompson owned 438 1-2 acres of land east of Vosseller avenue. Here he built his house in 1700. It was east of the Fisher Hotel in Middlebrook, and at the union of Main street and Vosseller avenue. Thompson lived here only a few years, for soon after we find the property in possession of Thomas Clawson, who sold it to William Wortman in 1720. In 1786 it was bought by Dr. Clarkson Freeman, who sold it to Tunis Ten Eick, and by him was sold to the Trustees of the Presbyterian Church, and used as the parsonage for the pastor of the church, Rev. Israel Read, who lived here until his sad death from an accident on November 28, 1793. When the Rev. David Barclay became pastor of the church, he bought the property of the trustees, and resided there until he removed from Bound Brook in 1805. The house was finally bought by the Central Railroad of New Jersey and pulled down in 1856.

There were two houses standing in the western part

of Bound Brook, known as Middlebrook, in the very early part of the 18th century, perhaps as early as 1700, according to some ancient records. These houses were both built by William Harris. They are known at the present day as the Merlett house and Fisher Hotel.

MERLETT HOUSE.

Of its early history very little is known. About 1810 it was owned by Israel Harris, who was the sheriff of Somerset county, and who sold it to Peres Bonney. George Heberton, a store-keeper in Bound Brook, was living in Middlebrook from 1784 to 1805. From the deeds still in existence, there is good reason to believe that he owned this property, and lived in this house. The house is still standing, and is now occupied by a family of Hungarians.

FISHER HOTEL.

This was originally called "The Harris Tavern." It was the first hotel in Bound Brook and was built, and I believe has always been used, for this purpose. It is said that the first Masonic lodge in Somerset county was organized here. It is certain that in later years a Masonic lodge held its meetings in this building. During the Revolution this house was called "The Middlebrook Hotel." It was a favorite resort of many of the officers of the army. In the low ceiling may be seen to-day many marks made by the bayonets of the British soldiers. Very few changes have been made in this ancient building. In outward form and appearance, and in the arrangement of the interior rooms, it is a true representation of the style of architecture in the Colonial days.

In the year 1720 there was a "boom" in the real estate business in Bound Brook. As a result no less than eight houses were erected, six of them on Main street, during the year. Of these six, two are still standing. These six houses, taking them in order from east to west, were the Riddle house, Prant, Harpending, Van Court, Van Wagoner and Bonney houses.

RIDDLE HOUSE.

This was built by William Riddle, who was probably a son of Rev. Archibald Riddle, a Scotch minister who left his native land on account of the persecution, and was one of the party of Sir George Scot, who came over in the ship "Henry and Francis," in 1685, landing at Perth Amboy. William Riddle's house was on Main street, near the western line of the Presbyterian Church property.

PRANT HOUSE.

This was built by Dr. Cornelius Prant and stood a few feet east of the present residence of B. B. Matthews, M. D. Less than two years ago a pile of bricks and debris marked the site of the house, which is still remembered by many of our citizens. After the death of Dr. Prant the house was occupied by Mrs. Harpending, a daughter or niece of Dr. Prant, and her husband. It was sold to Dr. Jonathan F. Morris in 1790, but he probably never lived in it. In 1802 the property was sold to Joseph Bonney.

HARPENDING HOUSE.

This was the present house on Main street, owned by Dr. B. B. Matthews, part of which is used for his drug store and office. The eastern part of this building is of more modern date, but it is quite certain that the western portion, with some changes, is the original house. Hendrick Harpending came from Lingen, Holland, to Bound Brook. He bought a strip of land about 200 feet wide fronting on Main street, and running back to the Trembly line, now High street. His eastern boundary was Dr. Prant's land, and the western the land of Jacob De Groot. The only record we have of Hendrick Harpending is in the old deed conveying the land to him by George Cussart. From this we learn that he was a cordwainer—a shoemaker—and probably the first of that occupation in Bound Brook. He died some years before the Revolution. His property passed into the hands of his son Peter, who used the house as a hotel, giving it the name of "The Frelinghuysen House," in honor of Major-general

Frederick Frelinghuysen, of Somerset county. A large portrait of the General hung on the outside. This house was the scene of many notable gatherings during the Revolution. After the Declaration of American Independence was made public, the people all assembled on the street in front of this house and listened to the reading of the declaration of freedom by Hendrick Fisher, who was then President of the Provincial Congress of New Jersey, and who had exerted a strong influence in favor of independence. When he had finished reading, so great was the joy and enthusiasm of the people, that they mounted him upon their shoulders and paraded him through the street, while the old bell of Kell's Hall, then hanging in the belfry of the Presbyterian Church, was rung, cannons were fired and toasts drank by the patriots at the bar of the Frelinghuysen House.

In 1793 the house and lands attached were purchased by Ambrose E. Cook, M. D., who came from Sussex county. He had a large and profitable practice. He was a man of Herculean strength, and many stories are told of his wonderful power. He had many enemies, especially among the friends of his brother physicians. On one occasion a party of three came to the hotel, saying that they had come to give Dr. Cook a good thrashing. They sent a message to him stating their object. Without delay he hastened to the bar-room of the hotel, where he found the intended thrashers in waiting for him. Placing himself in a corner of the room, he said, "Come on now, boys." They came. The first one received a terrific blow from the doctor's fist that broke his arm; the second one was thrown so violently against a table that his limb was broken, and the third, seeing the fate of his comrades, ran away. The victorious physician could afford to be magnanimous, and he very kindly set the broken bones, no doubt giving some good advice without extra charge. Dr. Cook died in this house in 1828, and was buried in the Presbyterian burying ground. At this time there

were no handles on the coffins. Three sticks were placed underneath, and six men at the ends carried the body to its resting place. Dr. Cook gave orders before his death, that a bier should be made, on which his coffin should be carried, and afterward should be placed on his grave and left there until it was needed at the next burial. This was done, and it remained there for twenty days. Some one wrote the following lines on a piece of paper and tacked it to the bier :

“The lamented Dr. Cook did die,
Yet memory ever brings him nigh ;
We'll strew his grave with early flowers,
And mourn his loss for that is ours.”

The two large maple trees in front of this house were set out by the two daughters of Dr. Cook, Althea and Ann, who afterward married Rev. John Boggs, the pastor of the Presbyterian Church. Dr. Abraham Skillman bought the property after the death of Dr. Cook, and lived here until his decease in 1862. He was a skillful and successful physician, and had the confidence of those among whom he practised. His son, Rev. Charles H. Skillman, a Presbyterian clergyman, was born in this house. After the death of Dr. Skillman the property was bought by Dr. Morey, who for several years was a practising physician here. In 1869 Dr. B. B. Matthews, the present owner, came into possession of the property. Thus for one hundred years it has been owned and occupied by physicians.

VAN COURT HOUSE.

Of the early history of this house we know only its date and first owner, who was Daniel Van Court. Jacob De Groot bought the house in 1830, and at his death left it by will to his nephew, who bore his name, Jacob DeGroot Swan, who was the son of Dr. Swan and Aletta De Groot. Alfred Cammann bought it in 1851 of Clarissa Swan. His widow, with her son, Elias H., and his wife, now reside there. Many changes have been made in this house, which have changed its appearance. The dormer windows were put in by

Jacob D. Swan. New windows, chimneys and a kitchen were added by Alfred Cammann.

VAN WAGONER HOUSE.

This is another of the early houses of Bound Brook, regarding which history is silent. It was built in 1720, by Garret Van Wagoner, M. D., and stood on the south side of Main street, a short distance east of the Middlebrook railroad crossing. Many years ago there was an old building in this vicinity where Jacob Van Deventer made fanning mills. He had a secret for weaving screens, known only to himself. This was probably the old Van Wagoner house.

BONNEY HOUSE.

This is the last of the 1720 houses on Main street. To many of our citizens this is known as the Rockafellow house. It was built by Joseph Bonney, the great-great-grandfather of Benjamin J. Bonney, now living at South Bound Brook. The house, which stood on the site of James Brady's house, was destroyed by fire May 8, 1882. It was the first house on the north side of Main street, east of the railroad crossing at Middlebrook. During the Revolution, this tragic deed was performed that made the Bonney house famous in history and aroused the patriot's anger against the Tories. At this time Benjamin Bonney, the son of Joseph, was living here. A company of British cavalry made a raid through Bound Brook. A number of Tories were with them as guides, among whom was Bill Stewart, a man well-known in Somerset county, and thoroughly hated by every loyal citizen, and in whose hand his life would have been worthless. When the British entered the town, Mr. Bonney took his little boy Peres, then only four years old, and hid in the cellar. Stewart, prowling around the house, saw him sitting on the cellar steps with his boy in his lap. He fired upon him, the ball striking him in the left groin, from which he died the third day after. The boy Peres was not injured, but lived to become an active and useful citizen, filling important positions in the county and in the church.

Benjamin Bonney had been a blacksmith, and at his death left his wife with two little children in very destitute circumstances. Through the kindness and charity of Jacob DeGroot and his wife, they were kept from actual suffering throughout the war.

ANDERSON HOUSE.

This house was located south of the lane leading to the residence of Hon. George LaMonte. It was built in 1720, by John Anderson, who resided here until 1744. He sold the house to Tobias Van Norden, who probably never occupied it, and who sold it to Matthew Harrison, who was living there during the Revolution. A few years ago when Isaac J. Fisher owned the place, he plowed up a cow-bell with the inscription, "1777, M. H." When Alexander Campbell lived at Racawacahana he owned the Anderson house, and used it as a dwelling place for his slaves. The house has been destroyed for a number of years. After 1720, there is no record of any house being built in Bound Brook until 1744, except the

SCHOOL HOUSE,

which stood on the church lot and a few feet west of the Presbyterian Church. This was built about 1742. The first teacher was John Wacker. He was followed by William Hedden, who taught until 1768, when he removed to Newark. Peter Welsh, a Scotchman, taught in this building until the new academy was built on Main street in 1800. This first school house was a long, low one-story building, and tradition says, "It was originally built as a meeting house for religious purposes."

In 1744 there was evidently another "boom" in Bound Brook, for no less than seven houses were built during that year, and all on Main street. These seven, beginning at the East, were the Kelso house, Williamson, Hude, Blackford, Stansbury, Irvine and Van Norden houses.

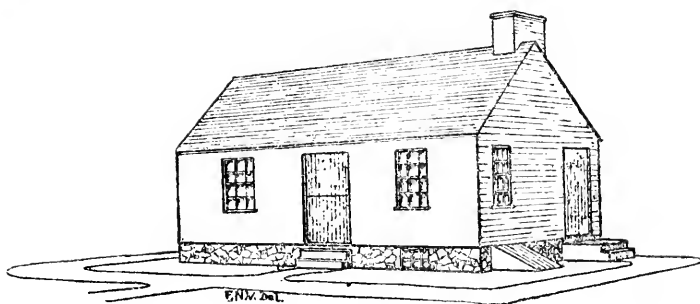
KELSO HOUSE.

Bartholomew Kelso bought the land of George Cusart and erected this dwelling. Its location was near

the present lower railroad crossing, on the east side of the street, and was the last house in the village. It passed away before the memory of the older persons now living had become active.

PETER WILLIAMSON HOUSE.

This is what is better known as the Battery house. It received this name during the Revolution when Gen. Benjamin Lincoln, who had his headquarters here, erected a block house almost in front of his house, in which cannon were placed to guard the crossing of the river and the road from New Brunswick. This house has met with as few changes, according to tradition, as any of the ante-Revolutionary houses. It stands to-day more dilapidated



Bonney House.

but yet the same in form and outline as when first built one hundred and forty-nine years ago. In the early morning of April 13, 1777, Gen. Lincoln was suddenly awakened by the cry from his guards "to arms!" He hastily arose to find himself and his little army almost surrounded by the British under the command of Lord Cornwallis. Springing to his horse, he with one of his aides, rallied his troops with great rapidity and led them between the two rapidly closing columns of the enemy and escaped to the mountain, with the loss of sixty men. All his baggage, papers and artillery fell into the hands of the enemy. After the war a family by the name of Connet lived in this house. One of the sons, John Connet,

was murdered by Samuel McDaniels, son of Col. McDaniels, of Pluckamin. McDaniels came to Bound Brook one day, and after drinking freely, became reckless and quarrelsome. He finally became engaged in a fight with John Connet, whom he stabbed fatally with a knife. McDaniels was arrested, and upon being tried was found guilty, and was sentenced to be hung. Though every effort was made to get him clear, and a reckless band of men had determined to break open the jail and free the prisoner, yet justice had full sway, and Samuel McDaniels was hanged. He was the only white man ever hanged in Somerset county under civil law. History relates that no less than five men were executed in the county under military law during the Revolution, three near Washington's Camp on the Middlebrook and two at Mt. Pleasant, near Finderne. Three men were also hung for horse-stealing across the street from the Elm Tree Tavern soon after the Revolution. This, however, is in Middlesex county. A family of Connets were still living in the Battery house as late as 1840. At one time, it is said, this house was kept as a hotel by a Mrs. Nester. This house is sadly neglected and in a very few years it will be numbered with the historic houses of the past.

HUDE HOUSE.

Built in 1744 by James Hude, son of Adam Hude, who had early taken up land near the mountain. It was located between the Presbyterian Church and the Battery House, on about the site of F. S. Carr's old meat market. Of the other residents after Hude, we know only that David Van Norden, son of Tobias, a captain in the Revolutionary army, once lived here.

BLACKFORD HOUSE.

This was built in 1744 by Anthony Blackford on land purchased from David Cussart. The house stood almost directly south of the Presbyterian Church across Main street. The house now owned by Lawrence Wells occupies the exact site. Anthony Blackford had three sons, Daniel, Benjamin and Joseph.

The former two were soldiers in the Revolution. Joseph was the father of Hon. Isaac N. Blackford, Judge of the Supreme Court of the United States. Daniel Blackford continued to reside in the original Blackford house, and kept a store until his death, in 1814. Ephraim Runyon lived in this house and had a tailor shop until about 1830, when he built the house now owned and occupied by P. O. Belding, on High street. The old house was torn down many years ago.

STANSBURY HOUSE.

This house was situated at the foot of Hamilton street, and on the south side of Main street. It was built in 1744 by Joseph Stansbury and occupied as his



De Groot House. (See page 9.)

residence. How long he lived here we do not know. In 1754, according to an old deed, he sold the western portion of the vacant lot on Main street, now owned by A. C. Mollison, to Dr. Cornelius Prunt. The Stansbury house in 1810 came into possession of John H. Voorhees, Esq. He resided here until 1835, when he built the residence on the hill now owned and occupied by the family of the late L. D. Cook. Mr. Voorhees built an addition to the old Stansbury house on the west end, which he used for a store and post office. He was the second postmaster in Bound Brook, and retained the position for over twenty-five years in succession, from 1814 to 1839. In 1841 he was again appointed postmaster, and was succeeded by Jeremiah R. Field in 1853. During this second term the post office was kept in the same building. John H. Voorhees was also for a number of years a Justice of the Peace. In this house John D. Voorhees and

his two sisters, Mrs. Van Deventer and Mrs. Brokaw, were born. John D. Voorhees was in partnership with his father for a number of years in this same store. Afterward he bought the entire business and continued as a merchant in the same building for a year, when he bought a house across the street and moved his business. Hiram Bush afterward kept store in the old Stansbury house, leasing it from John D. Voorhees. The land attached to the house was sold to Cook & Young, who used it for a coal and lumber yard, but John D. Voorhees retained possession of the dwelling, renting it to different tenants until about 1860, when he took it down. It was here that our honored townsman, John Bush, was married May 15, 1839, to Mary Jane Anderson. After the death of Gilbert Stryker, at Gateville, his widow and children resided here, among them the late James Stryker and Mrs. James Vosseller. The house was a long, low, one-story building fronting to the north. An attic had two windows in the eastern end. Only one room was partitioned off and furnished in this attic.

IRVINE HOUSE.

This house was on Main street on the corner of the present location of Hamilton street. It was built by Thomas Irvine. The house was afterward known as the Marsellus house. It was here that Theodore F. Runyon, United States Minister to Germany, lived when a boy.

VAN NORDEN HOUSE.

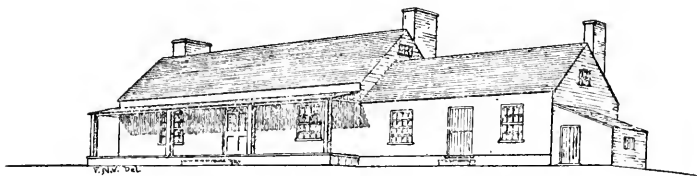
This is the last of the houses in the village that were built in 1744. Tobias Van Norden had come to Bound Brook in 1738 and opened a store in a part of the "Jew House." He continued here in business for six years, when he bought a lot and built a house on the north side of Main street about thirty feet from the corner of Maiden lane, which was then simply a passage way to the buildings and lots in the rear. This building is described as a long, low, one and a half-story building, standing broadside to the street,

and having two dormer windows projecting from the roof.

In the two west rooms, front and rear, he carried on his business as a merchant. He was also a baker. For this he had a separate building in the rear of his residence. His baking was mostly confined to ship bread, which he sold in New York, or exported direct to the West Indies by way of New Brunswick. He sold out his business in 1784 to George Heberton. The building was destroyed in 1856.

MC EWER HOUSE.

Many people remember a small house that stood back from Main street about two hundred feet, and near the eastern side of Cook & Co.'s lumber yard. This was built in 1746 by Charles Mc Ewer, of whose further history we know only this: that he sold his property in 1774 to Thomas Darby for £35. It was sold in 1793 to John Bray. In the last days of



Thompson House. (See page 10.)

the old house it was occupied by John Larney, who lived alone and who was said to be a miser, although his condition, by those who knew best, was said to be one of poverty. The building was destroyed many years ago.

COOPER HOUSE.

Thomas Cooper settled in Bound Brook in 1746. His house was one of the few on the south side of Main street in those early days. It was near the present "Union" hardware store, and I have reason to believe was the old building owned by the late Humphrey Mount, which he destroyed in 1869, for the purpose of erecting a new and more commodious dwelling. This new dwelling was burned in the great

Bound Brook fire. It was in the old house that Elias Van Arsdale, a shoemaker, lived. He was one of the leading men in the organization of the Reformed Church of South Bound Brook. It was in this house that the Rev. Nathaniel H. Van Arsdale, D.D., of Paterson, assistant editor of the *Christian Intelligencer*, was born.

HEDDEN HOUSE.

William Hedden was the second school teacher in the old school house. He bought a lot of Hendrick Harpending in 1750, and built a house in which he lived until he left the village in 1768. The house was on Main street, on the site of the store of A. E. Giddes. Hedden sold it to Thomas Coon, who sold it to Dr. Cook. He removed it to the rear of his lot and used it for a carriage house.

FISHER HOUSE.

In several old deeds there is mention of a house which stood on the north side of Main street, somewhere near the present store and residence of James T. Ferry. This land was sold before 1720 to Hendrick Fisher, of South Bound Brook, and by him was sold in 1765 to John Compton. It is certain that the house was already built at this last date. In 1767 John Compton sold it to Tobias Van Norden. By the old residents the house is still remembered and is called the Jennie Bailey house. Jennie Bailey was a daughter of John Larney, who lived in the McEwer house. She was a widow and lived here with her three children. The old house has been destroyed many years.

COL. STAATS HOUSE.

Col. John Staats, of Revolutionary fame, lived in an old house north of the Presbyterian burying ground. It was on the west side of East street, which was then a road leading up to Trembly's, now Shepherd's. The house stood fronting the east, and was built on the side hill, having a basement kitchen. Col. Staats had married Hannah, daughter of Peter Trembly. At her father's death, in 1797, she received

as her portion one hundred and fifty acres of land, being the southern half of the Trembly farm, extending to the present High street, and between East street and what is now Mountain avenue. She with her husband lived on this farm in the house above mentioned until their death. The property passed into the hands of their son-in-law, Nathan Van Kirk, who lived here. The house is still remembered by many, and called the Van Kirk house. John Staats was a colonel in the war of the Revolution, probably of the Minute Men, who were not regularly enlisted soldiers, but who were called on for local defense or in times of special danger. He rendered valiant service to the American cause, and more than once saved life and valuable property from the hands of British raiders. This old house is also one of the things of the past.

TREMBLY HOUSE.

This is still standing in a very dilapidated condition, at the good old age of one hundred and seventy-three years. It stands a few feet east of the present Shepherd residence, and for many years was occupied by the Shepherd family. Thomas Rudyard bought this property in 1683 from the eight proprietors, who bought all of the present borough of Bound Brook, their land extending to the Blue hills. George Cussart bought it in 1700, and in 1720 sold three hundred acres of it to Ebenezer Trembly. He built the old house in the same year. After his death the property was owned by his son Peter Trembly, who, dying in 1797, left his land in two equal parts to his two daughters, Susan, wife of Tunis Ten Eyck, and Hannah, wife of Col. John Staats. Tunis Ten Eyck and wife occupied the old Trembly homestead. They afterward sold it to Henry Shepherd, the father of Reune and L. V. D. Shepherd. In the old deeds of the Trembly estate, the brook on the eastern boundary is called the Bound brook. It is now known as the Greenbrook. Why, and when the change of name, I have not been able to ascertain.

At Middlebrook, there were standing a century ago,

three old houses of whose origin I can get no information.

Where the

MC BRIDE HOUSE

Now stands, was a very old building which was taken down by the late James McNabb, who built the present house on the same ground. In the early part of this century, the old house was occupied by William Beardsley until 1835. He was a tanner and currier, and also carried on the shoe-making business. Caleb C. Brokaw also lived in this house.

MC KISSACK HOUSE.

This original dwelling stands east of the former house, and near the western end of Middlebrook, on the south side of Main street. The first owner and builder of the house is not known. It certainly is one of the very oldest in this vicinity. In 1731 it was sold by the executors of William Stewart to Dr. John Griffith. Before Stewart owned it, the old deeds state that it had been in possession of William Wortman. Dr. Griffith sold it to Dr. Jonathan F. Morris. Dr. Samuel Swan bought it of Dr. Morris, and sold it to Joseph Bonney, from whom Dr. William Mc Kissack bought it in 1803, and lived in it until his death in 1831. Dr. McKissack was a successful physician, having a large practice both in Somerset and Middlesex counties. His wife was a daughter of Col. William McDonald, of Revolutionary fame. His son, William D. Mc Kissack, was also a physician, and a captain in the war of 1812, and afterward a Brigadier General of the state militia. The old house has met with many changes during its long history, but in its essential features it is still the original building.

A short distance north of the western Middlebrook railroad crossing are four large trees. These mark the site of what was known as the

CALEB MORTON HOUSE.

Caleb Morton was for many years the principal of the Bound Brook Academy. It was from him that the Hon. Theodore F. Runyon, the present United

States Minister to Germany, received his first school instruction. Caleb Morton owned this house and lived in it while teaching. He afterward sold it to James Mc Nabb, now deceased. It afterward came into possession of George La Monte, by whom it was destroyed. The date on the corner stone was 1752. By whom built or occupied, history or tradition does not relate. During the Revolution there is some reason for believing it was the home of Isaac Davis, an intimate friend of Washington, and at whose house the great general spent many a pleasant hour.

Between Bound Brook and the Blue hills, there were and are yet, some very old buildings.

MC ELRATH HOUSE.

Where the heirs of Stephen Brown now live, on Vosseller avenue, was a house built in 1700, and occupied by Thomas McElrath, and afterward by his son Thomas, who was a soldier in the Revolution. Both were at different times elders in the Presbyterian Church of Bound Brook. This house was a long, low building, facing the south, with three front rooms each having an outside door. The roof on the rear of the house was much wider than in front, and extended to within a few feet of the ground. A part of the building was made of logs. This house was re-placed by the present dwelling a few years ago.

MORRIS HOUSE.

Where the Mather house was burned a few years ago, Dr. Jonathan F. Morris lived after the Revolution. By whom and when built I do not know. Dr. Morris was a surgeon and lieutenant in the Revolutionary army. After taking up his residence here, he continued the practice of medicine, in which he was evidently very successful, for among the old records of deeds in Somerset county, his name appears very frequently as having sold property. Dr. Morris removed to Somerville, where he died in 1810. He is buried by the side of the Presbyterian Church in Bound Brook. The Morris house was afterward purchased by

Thomas Smith, and was the birthplace of his son ex-Councilman Peter H. Smith. The house was taken down by Thomas Smith in 1844, and the new house built in its place which was burned.

BROWN HOUSE.

Near the camp ground, and a few hundred yards east of the house of the late Benjamin Brown, is still standing a very old dwelling. This is probably the house built by Israel Brown, a tailor, early in 1700.

A mention of the First Houses of Bound Brook would not be complete, without the

VAN HORN HOUSE.

This is still standing on the west side of the Middlebrook, north of the mill, and is known as the Herbert House. During the Revolution, this was one of the most famous houses in Bound Brook and its vicinity. It was then called a "large mansion." Philip Van Horn, formerly a merchant in New York, lived here. This house was the headquarters of Major Lee, and several other American officers. Cornwallis and Grant, after driving Lincoln to the mountain on April 13, 1777, took breakfast at Van Horn's. Simcoe on his raid through Bound Brook, on October 26, 1777, stopped at this house, hoping to capture Col. Moyland, an American officer, who had married one of Van Horn's daughters. The Duke De Chastellaux, Maj. Gen. of the French army, at one time dined with Philip Van Horn. Van Horn, though very hospitable, was not a true patriot. Washington had him arrested, and compelled him to promise allegiance to the American cause. Van Horn had five beautiful daughters, who were a special source of attraction to the young army officers. Two of his daughters married American officers during the war. After the Revolution the property was sold, and the family moved away.

The most highly prized of all our First Houses of Bound Brook, is the

STAATS HOUSE

In South Bound Brook, now owned by Cornelius W.

La Tourette, and occupied by himself and family, and Amos Mc Donald and wife. In the frontispiece may be seen a picture taken from a photograph of the building as it now exists. The central part of this house is the original. The old fashioned double doors with the bull's-eye glasses; the window sashes and panes; the roof; the broad stairway; the low ceilings with heavy hewn beams; the wide fireplaces, all show us that this is an ancient building. It is the only house in this vicinity where you can really feel amid its architecture and interior adornments that you are back in the early days of the nation. In this house you may feast your eyes on its wealth of revolutionary relics. Here you can look upon oil paintings of those true American patriots, Abraham Staats, and his wife, in their quaint Dutch dress. You may be honored by sitting in the very chairs that once held Washington and his amiable wife, and many of the distinguished men of the Revolution. You may walk upon the same rugs they walked upon, look upon the same ornaments and pictures, and even quaff the elixir of life from vessels that were old when Washington was young. The old Staats house is indeed an ancient relic, worthy to be highly prized. It was here that Baron Steuben, Maj. Gen. of the American forces, had his headquarters while the army lay in camp on the mountain side. Abraham Staats, who resided here during the Revolution, was always true to the cause of Liberty. The British and Tories were his bitter enemies, but although they used every effort to capture him, they never could succeed, for their plans were always revealed by a slave Jack, who though a Tory, and mingled freely with the British learning all their secrets, yet he was faithful to his master. This house was built as early as 1700, by a man named Staats, who at that date was living here. It afterward was owned by his son, and by him sold to Abraham Staats some time before the Revolution, with three hundred acres of land.

From the earliest history of Bound Brook, one of the prominent buildings has been the old

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

Tradition says that the first church was of logs, and was in the willows near the river. On the present grounds there have been three buildings used for church purposes. The first was built in 1725, and was used until 1760; after 1742, it was also used during the week for school purposes. This stood a short distance west of the present building. In 1760, a building was erected on the same site of the present church. Part of the money for its erection was secured by a lottery. This church building stood through the Revolution. It retained, until its destruction in 1829, many marks of the bullets. This church contained 70 pews. The seats were unpainted, with straight backs and without cushions. The floor was without carpets. There was no ceiling, but the building was open to the roof. The pulpit was a huge box with a door on the east side. Above it was a large sounding board. The seats for the elders were on each side of the pulpit. This building was taken down, and the present structure erected, in 1829. This building was struck by lightning in 1851. When the necessary repairs were made, the church was also enlarged by the addition of twelve feet to the south end, and an entire new front.

Thus I have imperfectly sketched the houses of Bound Brook up to the Revolution. I have been careful in verifying dates, names and locations. I have not put too much faith in tradition, or in the erring memory of individuals. Some may think that I have failed to mention all of the first houses. But I have mentioned all for which I had substantial proof of their existence before 1775. These old houses should be to us precious memorials of the historic days, of which we have no reason to be ashamed, either of our town or our ancestors who dwelt here. Men may take long pilgrimages to visit the birth-places of poets, artists or statesmen. We

have houses here more worthy of veneration, for here were born noble men, sons of Liberty, who gave their lives for the nation, and with that sacrifice chains were burst asunder, prison doors thrown open, and a nation came forth into freedom, equality and happiness.



LOCATIONS OF HOUSES.

On the opposite page is a modern map showing the locations of the first houses erected within the limits of the present borough of Bound Brook. Below are given their names corresponding to the numbers on the map.

No.	Name.	Erected
1.	Codrington	1683
2.	Anderson	1720
3.	Morton	1752
4.	McBride	unknown
5.	McKissack	unknown
6.	Merlett	1700
7.	Fisher Hotel	1700
8.	Thompson	1700
9.	Bonney	1720
10.	Van Wagoner	1720
11.	Van Court	1720
12.	De Groot	1700
13.	Cooper	1746
14.	Hedden	1750
15.	Harpending	1720
16.	Prant	1720
17.	Van Norden	1744
18.	Cussart	1700
19.	Stansbury	1744
20.	Irvine	1744
21.	Fisher	1765
22.	Riddle	1720
23.	McEwer	1746
24.	School House	1742
25.	Church	1725
26.	Blackford	1744
27.	Jew	1698
28.	Hude	1744
29.	Williamson	1744
30.	Block House	1777
31.	Kelso	1744
32.	Campbell	1684
33.	Col. Staats	unknown

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS
OF THE
Washington Camp Ground Association.

CONSTITUTION.

ARTICLE I. *Name*.—This organization shall be called THE WASHINGTON CAMP GROUND ASSOCIATION.

ART. II. *Object*.—The object of this Association shall be to cultivate a spirit of patriotism, to maintain a memorial of George Washington and the Continental Army while encamped in our county during the winters of 1777-1778 and 1778-1779, and the collection and preservation of papers, documents, relics and objects of interest connected with the War of the Revolution.

ART. III. *Members*.—Any man or woman may become a member of this Association by election. Honorary membership may be conferred on persons who have rendered special service to this Association.

ART. IV. *Officers*.—The officers of this Association shall be a President, three Vice-Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer and a Board of Six Trustees.

ART. V. *Duties of Officers*.—The President, who shall be ex officio a member of the Board of Trustees, shall preside at all meetings, and shall have a general care of the interests of the Association. The First Vice-President shall preside at any meeting in the absence of the President, and shall discharge the duties of that office during a vacancy. The Secretary shall keep a record of the acts and proceedings of the Association, and shall conduct the correspondence. The Treasurer shall collect and keep all funds belonging the Association, and shall only make such disbursements as shall be authorized by the Executive Committee. The Board of Trustees shall be entrusted with the care and keeping of all papers, relics, etc., owned by the Association, and shall make an annual report of the collections during the year. The President, Secretary and Treasurer shall constitute an Executive Committee, who shall arrange for all celebrations, and direct all the expenditures of the Association.

ART. VI. *Meetings*.—The annual meeting shall be held on

the 22nd of February, or on the legal holiday observed as Washington's Birthday. Three additional meetings shall be held on the third Mondays of May, August and November. Special meetings may be called by the President.

ART. VII. *Election*.—The election of officers shall be held at the annual meeting and shall be by ballot, a majority vote of all members present being necessary for an election.

ART. VIII. *Term of Office*.—All the officers shall be elected only for one year, with the exception of the Board of Trustees who shall be elected for three years. At the first election, however, two of the Trustees shall be elected for one year, and two for two years.

ART. IX. *Membership Fees*.—Each member shall pay as dues one dollar each year in advance.

ART. X. *Quorum*.—Ten members in good standing shall constitute a quorum.

BY-LAWS.

ART. I. The name of any person desiring membership may be proposed in any meeting by a member.

ART. II. Honorary members will not be expected to pay annual dues.

ART. III. No name will be enrolled until the annual dues are paid.

ART. IV. Annual dues are to be paid in advance. If not paid within six months the member shall be suspended. After one year without payment the name shall be erased from the roll.

ART. V. All officers shall continue to perform the duties of their respective offices until their successors are chosen.

ART. VI. All changes or amendments to the Constitution or By-Laws shall require two-thirds vote of all the members present.

MEMBERS
OF THE
Washington Camp Ground Association.

OFFICERS.

President—GEORGE LA MONTE.

Vice-President—W. H. WHITING.

Secretary—GAIUS HOFFMAN.

Treasurer—R. H. BROKAW.

Musical Director—E. E. SHAW.

Historian—T. E. DAVIS.

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W. H. Alpaugh,
Sylvanus Ayres, Jr.,
L. S. Bache,
A. J. Bailey,
Mrs. A. J. Bailey,
Harry L. Bailey,
J. W. Ballantine,
F. S. Carr,
D. D. Clark, Jr.,
John B. Coddington,
T. H. S. Cone,
Frederick Davey,
Mrs. Frederick Davey,
J. K. De Mott,
C. R. P. Fisher, M. D.,
Field G. Garretson,
G. De Witt Garretson,
Herbert Harney,
H. G. Herbert,
Taylor W. Jelliffe,
Hon. W. J. Keys,
Ransom Lamb,
Mrs. Ransom Lamb,
Hon. George La Monte,
Miss C. B. La Monte,
George M. La Monte,

W. H. Ayres,
Mrs. W. H. Ayres,
J. J. Bach,
M. W. Baxter,
P. V. Bergen,
R. H. Brokaw,
Mrs. R. H. Brokaw,
Charles Byer, Jr.,
L. S. Cook,
A. S. Coriell,
Mrs. A. S. Coriell,
C. E. Dunham,
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C. P. Fraleigh,
A. E. Giddes,
Wm. Griscom, Jr.,
H. M. Herbert,
J. E. Hillpot,
Gaius Hoffman,
W. G. Killmer,
C. H. Libbey,
J. I. Livingston,
Mrs. J. I. Livingston,
Mrs. George La Monte,
Robt. R. La Monte,
Andrew Lane,

E. D. La Tourette,	A. W. W. Mapes,
W. B. R. Mason,	James Mc Nabb,
Mrs. W. B. R. Mason,	Mrs. James Mc Nabb,
Walter Mc Bride,	George Mollison,
James Mc Donald,	H. L. Moore,
Charles Mc Nabb,	W. S. Negus,
John Olendorf,	Mrs. John Olendorf,
P. H. Oakley,	W. H. Powelson,
C. H. Perry,	Mrs. C. H. Perry,
W. H. Peeples,	R. A. Ross,
O. B. Reynolds,	John Rowland,
L. A. Riffert,	P. J. Staats,
Wm. Schure,	R. R. Stelle,
M. W. Scully,	George Stryker,
Mrs. M. W. Scully,	Gilbert B. Stryker,
E. E. Shaw,	Peter Stryker,
Mrs. E. E. Shaw,	Willis Stryker,
W. W. Smalley,	H. C. Suydam,
John G. Smith,	R. H. Swayze,
John G. Smith, Jr.,	Mrs. R. H. Swayze,
Peter H. Smith,	Knox Taylor,
Charles Tappen,	C. W. Thomae,
W. J. Taylor,	C. H. Tucker,
Mrs. W. J. Taylor,	John D. Voorhees,
Mrs. Anna L. Voorhees,	James Vosseller,
F. N. Voorhees,	John Vosseller,
W. H. Whiting,	Ralph D. Whiting,
Mrs. W. H. Whiting,	T. C. Whitlock,
Irving S. Whiting,	C. M. Woods, Jr.,
	L. A. Zohe.

HONORARY MEMBERS.

Rev. J. B. Cleaver,	Rev. H. B. MacCauley,
Mrs. J. B. Cleaver,	Rev. A. M. Mann,
Rev. T. E. Davis,	Rev. F. A. Mason,
Mrs. T. E. Davis,	Mrs. F. A. Mason,
Rev. L. B. Goodrich,	Rev. A. S. Phelps,
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Rev. A. H. Lewis, D. D.,	J. Newton Voorhees.

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